

## TRIBUTE TO NICHOLAS BENSON

**HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY**

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 1, 2007*

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, I would first like to acknowledge everything that the National Heritage Fellowship has meant to this country over the past 25 years. It has been a vital inspiration for those who practice traditional arts and Americans owe so much of our nation's artistic diversity to the Fellowship.

I also speak today to honor the achievements of Nicholas Benson. In Rhode Island, a place where there is no shortage of history, the contributions of Mr. Benson's family stand out for their beauty, charm and authenticity. Mr. Benson oversees a stone carving shop that has been in his family for three generations and has been operating continuously for over three hundred years.

Thankfully, the contributions of Nicholas Benson and his family have not been limited to Rhode Island. From the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama to the World War II Memorial here in Washington, DC, his work is a part of our history. In a country where so much of our history is recorded through art, I am reminded of something John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail in 1780,

"I must study politics and war, that our sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. Our sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce and agriculture in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry and porcelain."

Nicholas, in producing three generations of outstanding artists, your family has surpassed even the dreams of John Adams himself. I would like to congratulate you once again. It is my hope that this fellowship allows you to further your craft and to continue the work of your family. You are an inspiration to us all.

IN HONOR OF BERGEN TECHNICAL  
SCHOOL'S PARTNERSHIP WITH  
STATE FARM TO PROMOTE SAFE  
TEEN DRIVING

**HON. SCOTT GARRETT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 1, 2007*

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the faculty, staff, and students at Bergen Technical High School who have partnered with State Farm to promote safe teen driving.

Far too many young people lose their lives senselessly to motor vehicle accidents, largely because of their youth and inexperience behind the wheel. In fact, 14 percent of all motor vehicle deaths are teen drivers and car crashes is the number one killer of teens today. State Farm has developed a phenomenal program called Project Ignition, committed to reversing this trend and saving teens on the road. This popular program partners with local schools to develop ad campaigns to promote safe driving in ways that really speak to young people.

Bergen Technical High School is one of only 25 schools nationwide chosen to participate in this program. Their visual graphic design pro-

gram is creating a series of public service announcements for television, posters, and more to speak to teens about the importance of driving responsibly and safely. Streetwise, the name of their program, promotes six character education pillars—respect, responsibility, citizenship, fairness, caring, and trustworthiness—in ways that really resonate with their target audience.

Today, the participants in this innovative program celebrated their work while trying to break the Guinness Book of World Records record for the longest message/graffiti scroll using their Streetwise message. They will be joined by fellow students from other Bergen County High Schools and supportive parents and citizens throughout the County. All of Bergen County is proud of their efforts.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVER-  
SARY OF VILLA JULIE COLLEGE

**HON. JOHN P. SARBANES**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 1, 2007*

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Villa Julie College in Stevenson, Maryland on its Founder's Day which recognizes the accomplishments of the remarkable women who helped establish the College and honors those who have since contributed and continue to contribute to Villa Julie's vitality.

Villa Julie has developed from a one-year women's secretarial college into a four-year, co-educational liberal arts institution offering career-focused Bachelor's and Master's degrees in a variety of programs. It has transitioned from a local commuter college to a regional residential institute of higher learning. Enrollment has increased more than 45 percent in 7 years; revenues have doubled and the endowment has increased by more than \$11 million since 2000.

Today Villa Julie is Maryland's third largest independent college and it has earned recognition as a "best value" by several national news sources including U.S. News and World Report which ranked it in the top quarter for its classification. Villa Julie's distinct approach of blending liberal arts with a career focus continues to attract terrific students from around the region. Students have benefited significantly from Career Architecture, an award-winning process developed to assist them in building a career plan based on individual values, skills, and interests. More than 70 percent of incoming freshmen over the past six years say the College's reputation of preparing students for rewarding careers was "very important" in their decision to attend.

As the College continues to expand, it has stayed true to its mission of increasing access to higher education. Student surveys indicate that about 60 percent of Villa Julie students are the first in their family to attend college.

Madam Speaker, Villa Julie is a special place. The College, its founders and supporters can take enormous pride in how it has successfully adapted over time and in the difference it has made in the lives of so many in this area. I take this opportunity on Founder's Day to congratulate Villa Julie for its commitment to higher education over the past 60 years.

TRAVEL BAN ON SYRIAN ACTIVIST  
RIAD SEIF

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 1, 2007*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the Syrian human rights activist Riad Seif. Mr. Seif is a former Member of Parliament and a prisoner of conscience held by the Syrian Government, one of hundreds like him who are prohibited from leaving Syria to see family, pursue education, or seek medical care. Mr. Seif desperately needs medical attention and should be allowed to leave Syria to seek this care.

I call upon the Syrian Government to immediately lift the travel ban against Mr. Seif and others who are prevented from leaving Syria because of their stand for freedom and human rights. Mr. Seif should be released to seek the medical care that he so urgently needs.

IN HONOR OF THE MILL CREEK  
FIRE COMPANY AND ITS LADIES'  
AUXILIARY; HONORING: JOSEPH  
H. MULLINS, SR., LAWRENCE  
MERGENTHALER, AND CATH-  
ERINE W. JENKINS

**HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE**

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 1, 2007*

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the Mill Creek Fire Company and its Ladies' Auxiliary for providing the people of Delaware with 80 years of outstanding service. The importance of emergency fire and medical services within our communities cannot be underscored enough. I am proud to represent a state that is home to such selfless and dedicated firefighters, EMTs, and service volunteers as those at the Mill Creek Fire Company here in Delaware.

The Mill Creek Fire Company was born from a tradition of strong community involvement and has kept that tradition alive through the years. The fire company had its humble beginnings in the Social Room of the Marshallton United Methodist Church back in 1927, when seven community members each chipped in one dollar to start the Mill Creek Fire Company Treasury. From that point on, it has steadily grown into a pillar of strength within the community. Residents within its 17 square mile response district have come to rely on the company not only for safety, but also for the social role it plays in bringing the community together. The Mill Creek Fire Company's unique, green fire trucks have become a source of pride, and serve as a reminder of the dedication and spirit which enable the company to excel.

On this special anniversary, I would like to recognize three individuals for their unprecedented dedication to the Mill Creek Fire Company; Joseph H. Mullins, Sr., Lawrence Mergenthaler, and Catherine W. Jenkins. They have each put forth tremendous effort to make the organization what it is today.

Joseph Mullins joined the company in 1938, from which point he went on to serve as Chief